

Brookline Preservation Commission

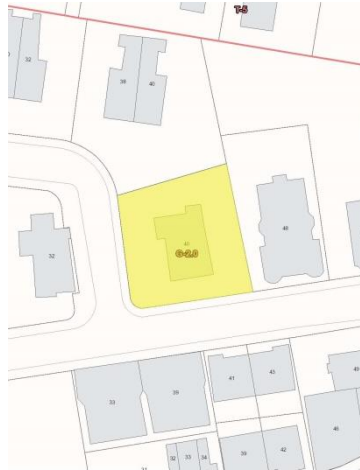
Demolition Application Report

Address: 40 Kent Street

Applicant: 40 Kent Street, LLC

Building Type: Social Club and Garage

State Register Listing (if Applicable): N/A



Historical/Architectural Significance:

According to atlases, 40 Kent Street was built between 1844 and 1855, with reports referencing 1851 as a construction date. At the time this section of Kent Street was known as Harrison Place. The former single family residence was built for Ginery Twichell, a well-known local figure, who moved to Brookline and purchased this property in 1850 and resided in the structure until his death in 1883 of typhoid fever. Twichell was born in Athol, MA in 1811, son of Francis and Sally Twichell, and by the 1830s, Twichell had purchased a stage line, and soon after went to Washington DC to obtain contracts for additional stage lines and made a name for himself in the stagecoach business. Twichell gained notoriety in January 1846 as an express rider when on horseback for two thirds of the way, Twichell brought news of British elections from Boston to New York four hours faster than his rival who traveled by train and steamboat. To commemorate the achievement, a lithograph titled “The Unrivalled Express Rider” was done.

In 1849 Twichell was appointed superintendent of the Boston & Worcester Railroad and its president in 1857, while residing at 40 Kent Street, which could explain the choice for the location of his house so close to the railroad and Brookline Station. During the Civil War Twichell did his part for the Union by carrying important dispatches from Washington to New York. According to Ken Liss of the Brookline Historical Society, President Ulysses S. Grant visited Twichell after the Civil War, and possibly visited his house on Kent Street. Well liked, Twichell was elected as a U.S. Representative for Massachusetts’s third congressional district, an office he served three consecutive terms from 1867 – 1873. Twichell continued his career in transportation and served as president of various railroads including the Atchison, Topeka and Santé Fe Railway Co. and the Boston, Barre and Gardiner Railroad Co.

In 1885 the property was sold to Albert Lincoln Jr. for \$8850, and the property remained in the Lincoln family until 1941, and it appears likely that the Lincoln family continuously used 40 Kent Street, as well as neighboring properties, as rental properties. Between 1941 – 1966, the property changed ownership four times, with Brookline Lodge #886 purchasing the property from Thomas and Elsa Barrett in December 1966. The previous location for Brookline Lodge #886 had been close by at 12 Kent Street, however according to reports, the property was taken by eminent domain in 1962. For the next fifty four years the structure at 40 Kent Street remained in the ownership and use of the Brookline Elks Lodge #886 until it was sold this year to the current owner, 40 Kent Street LLC.

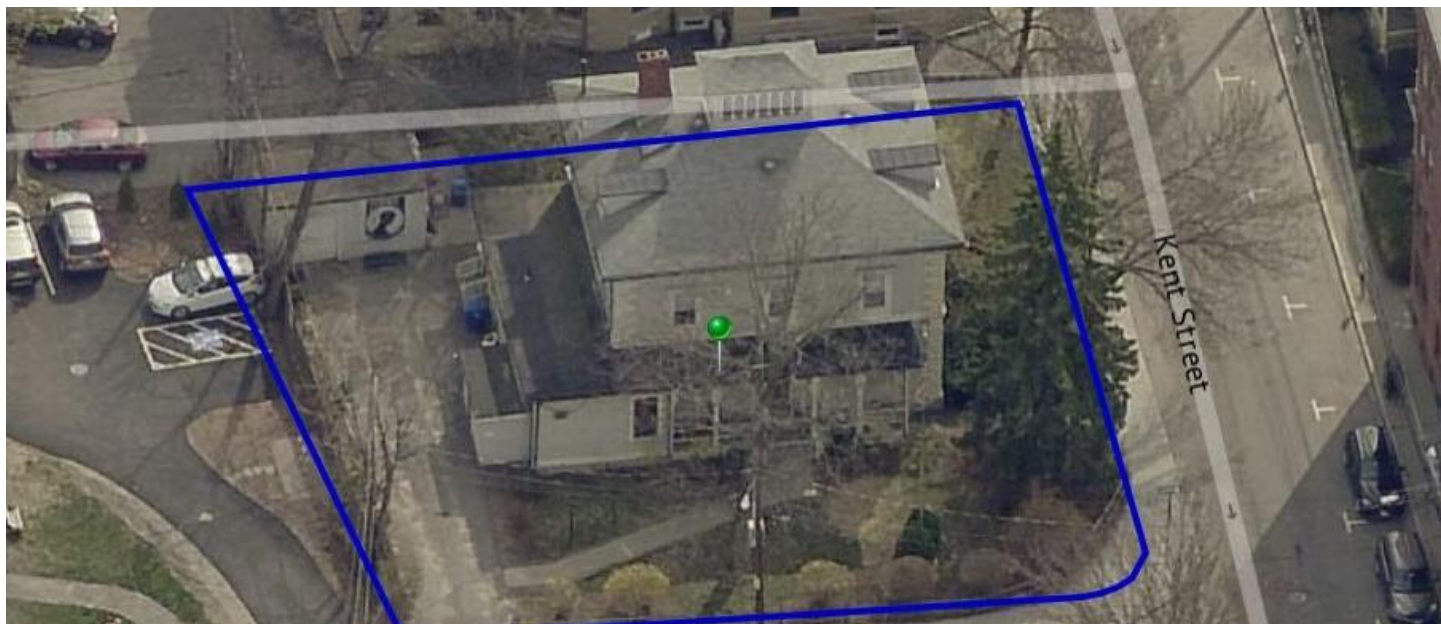
The Italianate main structure at 40 Kent Street actually fronts Webster Place and even with exterior changes over the decades, remains an attractive example of its architectural style. Notable features on the wood structure include its center cupola with seven arched windows on the facade, low pitched hip roof with widely overhanging eaves supported by paired decorative brackets, and its nearly full width open front porch accentuated with arched supports. Additionally, the quoins on all corners and decorative window surround treatment have been retained.

In 1946 then owner Patrick Murray constructed a one story, 20' x 20' concrete accessory garage structure with a flat roof, which would also function as a shop in the corner of the property, with a driveway off of Webster Place. The structure replaced a smaller steel garage in a similar location, a location which was also used for accessory structures when Ginery Twichell resided at the property.

The buildings at 40 Kent Street meets the following criteria for an initial determination of significance:

- c. The buildings are associated with one or more significant historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social history of the town or Commonwealth; and
- d. The buildings are historically or architecturally significant in terms of its period, style, method of construction, or its association with a significant architect or builder, either by itself or as part of a group of buildings.

The buildings at 40 Kent Street retains integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, materials, and workmanship.



Aerial view of 40 Kent Street, looking east.



Aerial view of 40 Kent Street, looking north.



Aerial view of 40 Kent Street, looking south.



Aerial view of 40 Kent Street, looking west.



Photograph of the front of 40 Kent Street taken by staff in 2020



Photograph of the front of 40 Kent Street taken by staff in 2020



Photographs of the right side (facing Kent Street) and rear of 40 Kent Street taken by staff in 2020



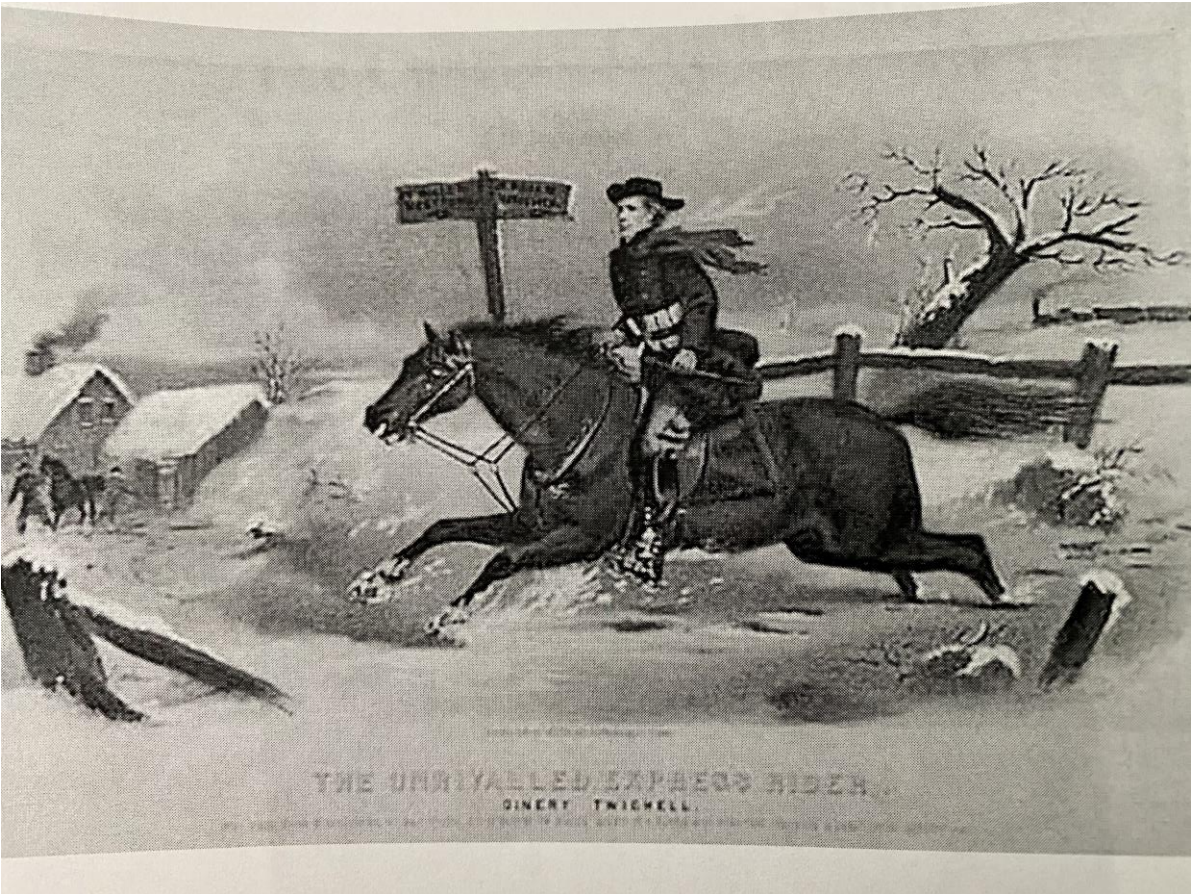
Photograph of the left side and garage at 40 Kent Street provided by the applicant



Photographs of the detached garage at 40 Kent Street provided by the applicant



1855 Town Atlas. Note that when Ginery Twichell owned the property this portion of today’s Kent Street was known as Harrison Place



Lithograph depicting Ginery Twichell’s ride in 1846